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As a general rule, all ascending passages should increase, and descending passages decrease in loudness of tone.

Reiterated or insisting passages should increase in loudness, unless the repetition is intended as an echo to the original phrase.

All syncopated, suspended notes, and those foreign to a chord, should be emphasised, and their resolutions clearly defined.

In the execution of rapid passages, a good singer should never let any signs of *hurry* be evident, and must impart life and energy to very slow movements by diversified and graduated tones.

Every appearance of effort or exhaustion should be avoided, that the minds of an audience may remain in a state of pleasurable security rather than of surprise or suspense.

Singers should never debase their own standard of taste to gain popularity; if their own judgment pronounce a composition to be worthless and unmeaning, they should, if possible, decline to perform it. It is the duty of every artiste to form and elevate musical taste, and the public is much more intelligent than some musicians suppose. It is true that much applause is bestowed upon mere mechanical execution, but this expression of delight is temporary, and very different from the placid, but perfect enjoyment experienced by an audience appreciating the worthy performance of some classical work, always heard with renewed pleasure. The dignity of Art, and of those devoted to it, will ever be respected, unless degraded by artistes themselves.

THE HANDEL COMMEMORATION FESTIVAL.

A PROGRAMME of the arrangements for the forthcoming Handel Festival has been issued by the Directors of the Crystal Palace. The preliminary Festival of 1857 enabled the promoters of it to ascertain the amount of duly-qualified assistance, both from professors and from amateurs, which might be relied upon; and also to settle what arrangements and combinations of so unprecedented a number of musicians, would conduce to the most efficient performance of the choral works of the great master. It is stated that the central transept of the Crystal Palace, which may for this purpose be considered as a great music hall, is 260 feet long by 216 feet wide, and contains an area of 77,760 square feet, exclusive of several tiers of galleries. At the Festival of 1857, it was discovered that the mass of performers did not produce the overpowering sound anticipated; and that, notwithstanding the grandeur of the choruses, the tone did not completely fill the area of the great transept, and might have been still further augmented with advantage. Upon these considerations, it is determined that the orchestra shall be extended at the sides and in the front, so that the number of performers will fall little short of 4000. There will be a solid boarded enclosure running round the entire back of the orchestra and organ, and a roof of repellant material will join the enclosure, and extend forward beyond the line of the conductor's seat. A contrivance for assisting the voices of the solo vocalists is also in preparation, and experiments which have been made lead to the anticipation of the most satisfactory results from the additions. The size of the orchestra will now be 216 feet—that is, the full width of the transept, with a central depth from front to back of about 100 feet. Its extent will be more clearly appreciated when it is stated that the width is ex-

actly double the diameter of the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, and that the area, which is 16,016 square feet, exceeds the combined orchestras of Westminster Abbey and York Minster as arranged for the festivals, the Birmingham Town Hall, St. George's Hall, Bradford, the Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool, and some other smaller orchestras. The diagram, which will be found in p. 83, will fully illustrate these comparative dimensions. From the arrangements in progress, every confidence is felt that the acoustic improvements will result in greatly-increased concentration and unity of tone. At the same time, the appearance of the orchestra will be materially improved, by its more perfect proportions, and by the decorations which it is proposed to adopt. Since the last festival performance at the Crystal Palace, great pains have been taken by the Sacred Harmonic Society to keep together the large mass of chorus-singers forming the Metropolitan Chorus, and they have greatly improved with regular rehearsals. After much deliberation, it has been decided that three performances shall take place, on the 20th, 22nd, and 24th of June, and that the music will be, on the first day, the *Messiah*; the second day, the *Dettingen Te Deum*, and a selection, chiefly choruses, from *Saul*, *Samson*, *Belshazzar*, *Judas Maccabæus*, and other works. On third day will be given, as last year, the oratorio of *Israel in Egypt*.

MADAME CLARA NOVELLO.—In reply to enquiries made, we learn "it is possible Madame Clara Novello *will not sing* at the Crystal Palace Commemoration of Handel next June."

Reviews.

Moore's Irish Melodies, with New Symphonies and Accompaniments, by M. W. BALFE. J. Alfred Novello, Dean Street, Soho.

HAD Sir John Stevenson arranged the airs in Thomas Moore's national work discreetly, it is probable that no rival edition would ever have been projected. The attention of the public has been long directed to the inappropriate manner (to use a mild epithet) in which the "Irish Melodies" have been set. Not long since, in our notice of the "People's Edition," we had occasion to point out the errors of Sir John Stevenson. That he wrote some pretty tunes—among others, "O then, dearest Ellen, I'll love you no more"—is not to be denied. His education, however, was defective, and his taste was execrable. His attempts at fine writing, in the symphonies to the "Irish Melodies," are puerile in the extreme, besides being often faulty and inappropriate. No doubt, Sir John Stevenson had never seen—or, having seen, never troubled himself about—Haydn's arrangements of the "Scotch Melodies," which might otherwise have served him as models.

The preface to the edition just issued by Mr. Novello, informs us that Mr. Bunting, in the second volume of his book on Irish Music, was the first to call attention to the manner in which the Melodies had been maltreated. Thomas Moore, however, who had little knowledge of music himself, entertained a very great respect for his colleague, and threw the shield so manfully over him, that the public forgave the musician for the sake of the poet. It remained for our own days to show Sir John in his proper colours. Enjoying a certain reputation in his own country, about the grounds of which no one took the trouble to inquire, with engaging social qualities, and clever to boot, it is not singular that his claims were undisputed at a period when real musicians were scarce, and music so little cultivated. In the preface just mentioned, the reader will find a full statement of the reasons that induced the publisher to issue the present edition of the "Irish Melodies."

Of Mr. Balfe's share of the work we are bound to speak in terms of hearty praise. Although the arrangement of simple ballads does not necessarily imply any vast amount

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of musical learning, there will frequently occur points in which a practised and familiar hand is required, and to which none but a thorough musician can do justice. There is also to be considered the *fitness* of the accompaniments, the style best suited to particular airs, and the colouring to give a charm to the whole; to which may be added, judgment to regulate the use of ornament. When these requirements are considered, it will be acknowledged that it is a task of some responsibility, which only a musician can accomplish in a satisfactory manner. That Mr. Balfe has been successful was only to be expected. We are glad of it, nevertheless; and beg to congratulate Mr. Novello.—*Musical World*, March 5, 1859.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We cannot undertake to return offered contributions; the authors, therefore, will do well to retain copies.

The late hour at which Advertisements reach us, interferes much with their proper classification.

Colored Envelopes are sent to all Subscribers whose payment in advance is exhausted. The paper will be discontinued where the Subscriber neglects to renew. We again remind those who are disappointed in getting back numbers, that only the music pages are stereotyped, and of the rest of the paper, only sufficient are printed to supply the current sale.

Notices of concerts and other information supplied by our friends in the country, must be forwarded as early as possible after the occurrence, otherwise they cannot be inserted. Our correspondents must specifically denote the date of each concert, for without such date no notice can be taken of the performance. All communications must be authenticated by the proper name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication.

We would request those who send us country newspapers, wishing us to read particular paragraphs, to mark the passage, by cutting a slip in the paper near it.

Musical Contributions.—We take this opportunity of thanking many of our friends for their kindness in offering us musical compositions for publication, but it is right to state that it would be quite inconsistent with our arrangements to entertain any offer of this nature.

Brief Chronicle of the last Month.

BARNSELY.—Mr. Wood, organist of Pitt-street Chapel, has been appointed organist and choir-master of St. George's Church.

BERWICK.—On the 23rd of Feb., the Church Choir gave their annual concert, in the Girls' School, to a large and very select audience, including many ladies from the town and country. The singers consisted of three men and five boys, and were accompanied by Mr. Young on the piano-forte. The programme contained fourteen pieces of secular music, glees, songs, and catches, very well chosen and very well arranged. The performance of the several pieces was highly creditable, and showed very careful training—reflecting much credit upon Mr. Young and his pupils.

BIRMINGHAM.—A performance of the *Messiah* was given at the New Music Hall, on the 28th of February, which attracted a numerous audience. The principal vocalists engaged were Miss Whitham, Mr. Bickley, Mr. John W. Morgan, and Mr. Merrick. Mr. J. A. Baker conducted. —The weekly concert at the Music Hall took place on Monday, the 7th ult., conducted by Mr. J. A. Baker, and strengthened by very considerable talent. The audience was large and discriminating, and greatly enjoyed the treat afforded in the engagements of the evening, especially that of the Misses McAlpine, whose voices were clear, full-toned, and melodious. The applause they received was well merited.—The *Creation* has been performed at the Town Hall, by the members of the Festival Choral Society, who volunteered their services for the benefit of, and as a mark of respect to their chorus-master and conductor, Mr. W. C. Stockley. The orchestra and chorus, numbering about 250, were in a high state of efficiency, and evidently exerted themselves to render the performance worthy of the occasion. The vocalists comprised Mrs. Sunderland, Mr. R. Mason, and Mr. Thomas.

BOURNEMOUTH (Hants).—The first public concert of the Church Choral Society was given on the 22nd of February, at the National School-room. The first part of the performance consisted of sacred music, including a selection from Handel's *Messiah*, and the second part comprised miscellaneous songs, glees, and choruses. Though this society has only been in existence since November last, it now numbers forty members, and the progress they have made is most satisfactory. The concert was conducted with ability by Mr. Jackson, the organist of the Church.

BURY APOLLO GLEE CLUB.—The sixth subscription meeting of the season was held on the 3rd ult., at the Cotton Tree Inn. On this occasion, Mrs. Brooke, from Manchester, was present, and sang several favourite compositions. Mr. Leeming, as usual, presided as accompanist and conductor.

CANTERBURY.—On the 16th of February, an excellent performance was given by the Catch Club, when a number of favourite songs, duets, and glees were well sung. The principal singers were Mrs. Pillow, Messrs. Plant, Newsome, and Farrow. Mr. Longhurst conducted.—The eighth public performance of the Musical Union took place on the 7th ult., at the Music Hall. Two works, never before attempted in Canterbury, were produced on this occasion. The first was Gilliard's *Hymn of Adam and Eve*, lately presented to the society. The overture and orchestral arrangements are by Dr. Benj. Cooke. Much pains had evidently been taken in training the chorus, who sang with great care and precision. After this was given Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang*, which was well sung throughout. The solo singers were Mrs. Sturges, Mr. Newsome, Mr. Farrow, and two young choristers from the Cathedral. Mr. Longhurst, the conductor, has rendered the society most essential service, and deserves great praise. Mr. Lyon was the leader, and Messrs. Goulden and N. Irons presided at the pianoforte.

CHARD.—The usual monthly rehearsal of the Harmonic Society took place, at the Royal Assembly Rooms, on the 11th of March. The programme was very attractive, and the pieces were executed with much precision. The manner in which the points were taken up in the choruses deserves praise. Mr. Tozer was the conductor.

CHELSEA.—On the 15th ult., the Chelsea Sacred Harmonic Society gave their first public concert of the season, at Radnor Chapel. The performance consisted of the *Creation*, the principal vocalists being Miss Ward, Mr. Lovelock, Messrs. Nightingale and Robson. The band was complete in every respect, and was conducted by Mr. Holderness.

DARLSTON.—The Sacred Harmonic Society gave a performance of Handel's *Messiah*, in St. George's School-room, on the 8th ult. The principal vocalists were Miss Baker, Mrs. John Hayward, Mr. Dangerfield, and Mr. G. Mainwaring. Mr. Henry Hayward led the band, and Mr. W. C. Stockley conducted. The solos were well rendered, and the executive skill of both band and chorus was worthy of all praise.

DERBY.—The Harmonic Society of this town gave their third concert for the season, in the Temperance Hall, on the 1st of March. The large hall was well filled, more than one thousand persons being present. The first part consisted of Haydn's *Spring*, which was well performed. Miss Poyzer, Mr. T. B. Carnall, and Mr. J. O. Christian, were the solo vocalists; Mr. C. Horsley was the conductor. The second part was of a miscellaneous character, consisting of part-songs, glees, &c. The concert gave unqualified satisfaction. At the next concert, Van Bree's *St. Cecilia's Day* will be performed.

DEVIZES.—The second concert of the Amateur Vocal Society was given at the Town Hall, on the 28th of Feb., when above 400 persons were present. The music was entirely secular, including songs, duets, glees, &c. The performance was highly satisfactory. Conductor, Mr. C. Clarke. The members of the society now number 160.